

MR. M'ALEESE.

RETURN to an Order of the Honourable The House of Commons,  
dated 17 June 1873;—for,

COPY "of the LETTER of the Local Inspector to the Inspector General of Prisons, dated the 2nd day of May 1873, containing the Reply of the Board of Superintendence of County Antrim Gaol to the Allegations made as to the Treatment of Mr. M'Alcese while a Prisoner in that Gaol."

Irish Office,  
25 June 1873.

County Antrim Gaol,  
Belfast, 2 May 1873.

Gentlemen,  
I HAVE the honour to state that I laid the file of papers in the case of Daniel M'Alcese, which you forwarded to me, before the Board of Superintendence this day, and send you an extract from their Minutes; I also return the file.

"The Board of Superintendence of County of Antrim Gaol have had under their consideration the file of papers transmitted by the Inspectors General, containing complaints made by Joseph G. Biggar in a letter to the 'Irish Times;' and also complaints by other parties as to the mode of treatment of Daniel M'Alcese, under sentence of four months' imprisonment in this gaol, for contempt of Court at Spring Assizes 1873. They have also considered copies of the correspondence between the local Inspector and the Inspectors General.

"They gather from all sources that it is alleged that the treatment of Daniel M'Alcese is exceptionally severe, and they think they can most clearly report upon the whole case, as they have been requested to do, by noting the allegations separately, so far as they have been able to collect them, and by following each allegation by a statement from themselves in detail of facts gathered from the correspondence and inquiry, as well as by personal intercourse with the prisoner himself.

"1st. It has been complained that he is fed on scanty prison fare and that his clothing is insufficient.

"We state that he has never been put upon prison fare or in prison dress. He has always worn his own clothes and procured his own food, although the 19 & 20 Vict. c. 68, s. 17, orders that prison dress shall be worn by all prisoners whose imprisonment shall exceed one month, unless the Board shall direct otherwise, subject to the power of the Lord Lieutenant to rescind their order, and the 16th section directs that it shall not be lawful for any convicted prisoner to use any food other than prison fare.

"2nd. It is complained that he occupies an ordinary cell, and is obliged to clean it; and a contrast has been drawn between the room in which he is placed and that occupied lately by Mr. John Rea, who was committed on several occasions for one week for contempt of Court at Petit Sessions.

"We state that he has never been asked to clean his cell; this is done by an orderly, and the same accommodation which Mr. Rea had was offered to him, and declined, on the ground that he had a more extended and cheerful place for open-air exercise where he is, and he did not like to go to the hospital, in which we may observe, moreover, there has been lately typhus fever. He was again offered the same rooms, which Mr. Rea occupied, along with the use of the place

place where he takes his exercise; but he again declined it. He may be out all day, if he please.

" 3. It is complained that he has no fire, and is not allowed to have books, newspapers, writing materials, or private letters.

" We state that the prison has been heated with hot-water pipes, which acted perfectly; that this heating was continued for three weeks beyond the time allowed by the Act, up to 20 April, and the prisoner does not now complain of cold. He has as many books and has always had as much writing paper, &c., as he wishes for; and the only restriction upon newspapers has been that those which reflected in an intemperate manner upon the Administration have been stopped. On the suggestion of the Irish Government, we have agreed that this restriction may be removed. No private letter was ever stopped.

" 4. It is complained that he is greatly restricted in receiving visits, and that those visits can only be paid on Saturdays.

" We state that the 109th section, Prisons Act, allows convicted prisoners to receive a visit on the first Monday of each month, on producing an order from the local inspector or a member of the Board of Superintendence.

" Daniel M'Alreese was committed March 29, and has received the following visits:—

" March 29, two visits; three persons at first visit. April 1, two visits; five persons at first visit. April 3, four persons visited him at one time. April 4, one visit; April 6, three visits; April 7, three visits; four persons at first visit. April 10, one visit; April 12, two visits; April 14, five visits; two persons at first visit. April 15, one visit; April 17, two visits; April 18, six visits; April 19, three visits; April 22, three visits; April 24, one visit; April 26, one visit; April 28, one visit; April 30, one visit; May 1, two visits.

" There was no order for admission asked from any of the above.

" 5. It is complained that he lies on a hard bed.

" We do not object to him procuring a bed, if he can make room for it in his cell; he says his bed is comfortable, but narrow. He has been supplied with extra blankets and pillow.

" We add, that we sent for the prisoner, who stated that he had always received the greatest civility from the Governor and officers; that he wished to receive visits from his family without the presence of a warder, which we allowed. This request he had made for the first time two days since."

I have, &c.

(signed) *Richard Oulton,*  
Local Inspector.

The Inspectors General of Prisons,  
&c. &c. &c.

(Submitted.)

3 May 1873.

(signed) *John Lestaigne.*  
*Charles F. Bourke.*

M. B. WALKER

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*COPY of the Letters of the Lord Bishop to the Bishopric General of France, dated 1 May 1778, enclosing the Reply of the Board of Superintendence of Clergy, Addressed to the Abbots, made in to the Tenement of St. Andrew within a Prisoner in that City.*

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Ordered, by the House of Commons, to be Printed,  
2d June 1779.

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